



MAP HOUSING WORKING GROUP

Refugee Claimant Assets Mapping Advisory Committee

MINUTES

February 28, 2019 - 3:30 pm – 5:00 pm at MOSAIC, 5575 Boundary Road, Vancouver

Present: Chair: Theresa Harding (Metro Vancouver HPS)
Alexandra Dawley (Mosaic)
James Grunau (Journey Home)
Cherie Enns (Pomegranate)
Kingsley Eke (RC Lived Experience)
Loren Balisky, Derek Chu (Kinbrace)
Nathan Wright (BC211)
Tanyss Knowles (BC Society of Transition Houses)
Jenny Moss, Melissa Kwan (MAP)
Nicole Stinson (BC Housing)

Chair: Theresa Harding

Theresa welcomed everyone.

Regrets: Jenny Francis

1. **Outline and approval of Agenda** – Approved.
2. **Minutes** from previous meeting – Approved.
3. **Introductions made by Theresa**

Pomegranate's research to date (Cherie):

Cherie: The literature review and asset mapping is ongoing. We are also working on a point in time assessment, best practices. As for the housing journey stories, Kingsley has done 4 or 5 stories and these will further inform policy.

Cherie cannot speak much into the asset mapping updates since it is Hamed's role.

Alexandra: Could you talk about the origins of the RC's who shared stories?

Kingsley: Most are from Nigeria and they shared about their struggles.

The team will work to provide stories of RC's from Iran and elsewhere to get a more representative sample. Also the windows of RC arrivals are within the last 12 months.

Kingsley mentioned the new draft of Mukhtar's report addresses the concerns pointed out in the January meeting.

Theresa: What is the urgency to have the RCAM Report by March 15th? Loren could ask whether a preliminary report could meet the MJTT need for information and what specifically does MJTT want to know.

Updates:

1. Meeting with the Provincial Ministry 21 February

Jenny: The government asked for specific recommendations to be sent within the next 2 weeks. But we can't do that realistically. We could discuss about some preliminary things we can get done in the next 2 weeks, and then a final draft of what we will have done.

Theresa: We can tell government that we want to give them something as soon as possible, but we're still collecting narratives so it's impossible to have a draft report within 2 weeks. We can provide them with the stakeholders list they requested and excerpts from some of the RC narratives.

Loren: Whose job is it to listen to the community and start making a proposal? There should be a facilitating workshop designed to help gather information on time.

James: Due to the lack of time, maybe the workshop isn't the best way to address this. Since the government just wants recommendations, we could use the information we have already to write recommendations.

Nicole: I'm aware of work MJTT is doing with regard to a contingency plan if there is a large influx. In reality it seems we're seeing increasing need as opposed to a spike from an influx. We can focus on what recommendations better inform this policy, it is better to focus on reality.

Cherie had to leave – she will get in touch with **Loren** and **James** about what happened in the rest of the meeting and she will talk to **Mukhtar** about the project and its deadlines.

Loren: We could have the draft done by end of March and by mid-April is our aim to have the final recommendation done.

Theresa: We have our smaller research group to work with Pomegranate but the draft report isn't written; we're nowhere near ready to provide recommendations.

Nicole: Could we provide a range of options for government? Options from easiest and quickest to longer-term and most impactful.

Alexandra: Is this a funding deadline due to the government's urgency of asking or just a short-term goal they want to accomplish?

Nicole: It may not be a funding deadline but other things happening in government.

James: Concerning the federal government, the best solution might just be to find something that is scalable and could potentially handle a surge. What are some short and long term solutions that we have that could help turn housing into a sort of scalable opportunity?

Theresa: A short-term solution could be developing an intake and referral system, medium term could be the implementation of the intake and referral system, and long term could be a facility with two floors of refugee claimant housing, for up to 30-day stays; above ground level refugee claimant services, including the intake and referral service. It could be located South of Fraser.

James: If we could construct the facility with enough units, have enough staff, then we can mobilize a higher intensity of people and thus, fast-track people quicker. We would have more influx of people in a short amount of time.

Theresa: We could develop this concept in some detail for recommending to MJTT in 2 weeks.

Kingsley: Is there going to be affordable housing for RC's?

James: We are researching data about already available spaces including hotels and spaces that aren't being utilized that we could use.

Alexandra: We have to make sure that it reflects the voice of the majority, including those in the report from Alice Sundberg.

Loren: Should we set up a mid-month meeting before the 28th of March meeting? Since we have a lot of stuff to discuss.

James: Maybe we can have Loren talk to Vicki/ MJTT first and then see if we need a bigger meeting from there.

Theresa: There are two streams that need to come together: 1) Loren contacts Vicki about the deadline (whether we can push it back to end of March); asap, stakeholders participate in a workshop to provide input on the work Pomegranate is doing and recommendations; (Doodle poll to determine availability); before the workshop, the RCAM research group including Jenny F will meet with Pomegranate; this will generate a preliminary report for MJTT. March 15 will be difficult due date to meet. 2) Complete the outstanding refugee claimant interviews and organization surveys, integrate outcomes from the first workshop into materials for a 2nd workshop; write the final policy report with recommendations to provide to MAP and refugee claimant community by mid-April, and to MJTT.

Note: Pomegranate to write the preliminary and final reports.

Question as to who the decision-makers are: Map Co-chairs and the RCAM Advisory Cmtee.

Loren: We're building a mini forum and making sure the right people are in the room.

Kingsley will be at a meeting in New Westminster and asked about anything he should say regarding policy in housing.

James suggested that it'd be a good idea to bring the City of Vancouver policy: having access of the city with no fears and to build policy around this. He wants to take this policy to Burnaby too

Nathan: New Westminster is specific about rental housing, so it may be useful to be specific about what we could do for rental housing.

2. Tanyss Knowles: Project Coordinator, BC Society of Transition Houses, Getting Home Project <https://bcsth.ca/projects/getting-home/>. This is a 3-year province-wide research project looking at the barriers to women in second stage housing, to securing permanent affordable housing. The project is looking for what could enable more women to move out of transition housing in order to allow other women fleeing violence, to move in. The main issue is housing affordability. We hope to create partnerships with non-profits and landlords to create or hold spaces for women ready to leave second stage housing.

3. Update on MVCE

Theresa announced that after 20 years in the role, the Metro Vancouver board decided against continuing as the Community Entity to deliver federal homelessness funding in the Metro Vancouver region. The call for proposals that the Metro Vancouver Community Entity would have launched in early summer 2019 for new projects' start date April 2020, will likely be delayed while Canada selects another organization to be the Community Entity.

Jenny: Regardless, Theresa should continue with this project as we invited her to lead us because of her skillset.

Theresa will continue her role in the HWG and with the Refugee Claimant Asset Mapping Advisory Cmtee for as long as she can.

Theresa advised that the federal Reaching Home program allows funding for homeless newcomers and RC's. The homeless counts include a question to identify whether the person who is homeless is also a newcomer or refugee claimant. Persons couch surfing or in transitional housing are captured in the definition of homelessness. Many RC's are couch surfing or staying in short term housing and are therefore meeting the definition of homeless.

Next 2 Meetings will be held at Canadian Red Cross, 3400 Lake City Way, Burnaby:

- Workshop #1: March 18th , 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm
- Workshop #2: March 28th , 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Meeting Adjourned: 5:00 pm